

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: GDS

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SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM IN JERUSALEM ON MILITARY ASPECTS OF
ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT (OCTOBER 13-17)

REF: DAO 1992 DTG 241035Z OCT 75

1. REFTEL PROVIDED SUMMARY OF INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM HELD
IN JERUSALEM TWO WEEKS AGO. FOLLOWING ARE ADDITIONAL
OBSERVATIONS BY EMOFFS WHO ATTENDED SESSIONS.

2. CONFERENCE TENDED TO REINFORCE FEELING THAT ISRAELIS
ARE STILL SEARACHING FOR SOMETHING TO REPLACE ASSUMPTIONS
DESTROYED BY YOM KIPPUR WAR. ISRAELI PRESENTATIONS, FOR
EXAMPLE, FREQUENTLY ALLUDED TO ELEMENT OF SURPRISE WHICH
IN 1973 FOR FIRST TIME WAS USED TO ADVANTAGE BY ARAB FORCES
AND TO FACT THAT THIS WOULD NOT OCCUR AGAIN; AT SAME TIME
ISRAELI SPEAKERS MADE FREQUENT REFERENCES TO CONTINUING
INHERENT SUPERIORITY OF ISRAELI OFFICERS AND MEN, THEREBY
REFLECTING SAME TYPE OF SELF-CONFIDENCE WHICH MANY
COMMENTATORS BELIEVE LED LAST TIME TO MISPERCEPTION OF
ARAB CAPABILITIES AND LEFT ISRAEL VULNERABLE TO SURPRISE.
THERE WAS ALSO EVIDENT CONFUSION BETWEEN TRADITIONAL ISRAELI
READINESS TO FIGHT WITHOUT EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE IF NECESSARY

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AND PERCEIVED RELIANCE ON UNITED STATES ARMS SUPPLIES AS

COUNTERWEIGHT TO QUANTITY AND SOPHISTICATION OF ARMS WHICH ARAB STATES (ESPECIALLY SYRIA) CONTINUE TO RECEIVE FROM SOVIET UNION.

3. ONE WEEK AFTER CONCLUSION OF JERUSALEM SYMPOSIUM PRESS REVEALED THAT ISRAELI GOVERNMENT HAD INITIALLY FAILED TO COOPERATE WITH CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS, PRIMARILY FOR SECURITY REASONS. ACCORDING TO PRESS, OFFICIAL RELUCTANCE TO PARTICIPATE WAS BROKEN DOWN ONLY WHEN ISRAELIS BEGAN TO UNDERSTAND THAT SIMILAR EGYPTIAN EFFORT TWO WEEKS LATER WOULD BE "A LAVISH AFFAIR." EVEN SO, LEADING ISRAELI JOURNALIST WHO WAS MEMBER OF ORGANIZING COMMITTEE COMPLAINED TO US DURING WEEK AFTER CONFERENCE ENDED THAT MUCH OF HIS TIME WAS CONSUMED IN SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS WITH PARTICIPANTS WHO REMAINED IN JERUSALEM PRIOR TO PROCEEDING TO CAIRO, A JOB WHICH HE FELT SHOULD HAVE BEEN UNDERTAKEN BY GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES.

4. PERFORMANCE BY PRIME MINISTER RABIN AT EVENING Q&A SESSION OCTOBER 16 WAS PARTICULARLY NOTEWORTHY. HE FIELDDED APPARENTLY UNPLANNED QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR WITH NO EVIDENT REFERENCE TO NOTES FOR APPROXIMATELY TWO HOURS. HIS RESPONSES WERE MORE INFORMATIVE AND CANDID THAN USUAL, AND HIS MANNER MUCH MORE INFORMAL. HE MADE AN EXCELLENT IMPRESSION, AND SEVERAL ISRAELI PARTICIPANTS SUGGESTED THAT HE MAY HAVE HAD IN MIND INEVITABLE COMPARISON WITH SADAT, WHOSE EFFECTIVENESS IN PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS IS WELL-KNOWN HERE.

5. FOR CAIRO. TO BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, COLONEL TREVOR DUPUY IS ONLY AMERICAN PARTICIPANT IN CAIRO WHO ALSO ATTENDED JERUSALEM SYMPOSIUM. EMBASSY MIGHT PROFIT FROM HIS COMPARISON OF THE TWO. SIMILARLY, WE WOULD APPRECIATE BEING INFORMED OF ANY AMERICANS ATTENDING CAIRO SESSIONS WHO MIGHT BE PLANNING TO VISIT ISRAEL BEFORE RETURNING TO U.S.
TOON

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